

March 14, 1984

LB 880

SPEAKER NICHOL: Senator Wesely.

SENATOR WESELY: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I think there is some confusion about what the intent of my concern is. I am not trying to get us back to the bill with the dental coverage intact. I have an amendment which I filed which will keep our current state contribution to be the same for the next fiscal year as it is this year and thus will not provide for the pickup of the dental coverage. So if you look at the sheet, the handout that I have of the different options and keep in mind, there are lots of different options, I am looking at trying to get to the third option down. That is the Governor's plan with self-insurance without dental coverage and that self-insurance plan will actually have a .2 percent reduction in total funding for our state employee health insurance next year versus this year. I'm trying to save money. I'm trying to do the right thing in terms of health policy and all of you who are employers, all of you who have employees should know that our health insurance coverage for our state employees is, as I said, a Cadillac. We pick up three-quarters, four-fifths of the cost of our health insurance coverage. The employee themselves pick up a nominal fee at this time. And remember last year when we didn't give them a salary increase we picked up the total cost of the increase in health insurance for our state employees. That was a mistake and we knew at the time it was a mistake and so we passed in that bill, a requirement that a study be done to come up with a better sort of health insurance plan. And we all said at that plan, well, we'll take care of this problem next year. We'll look at it and we will study it and we will come back and we will deal with it next year and what do I hear this year? We're going to study it, we're going to look at it, we're going to come back and deal with it next year. When is this body going to stand up and do what is right when you know the policy is wrong? The policy that we now have is wrong. We ought to stop it and we ought to go in the direction that every other employee and employer group is going to, co-payments and deductibles. That is what it has got to be. Now I am familiar with some other plans around the state and familiar with those health insurance